

LEON COUNTY COUNTYWIDE CITIZENS
WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2003 Annual Report

- Jan. The committee received a presentation from Tony Park of the Leon County Department of Public Works. Mr. Park's presentation was the proposed acquisition of a portion of property belonging to Mr. Jim Smith, located at the northwest corner of McCracken and Miccosukee Roads. Purchase of the property would facilitate plans to make recommended improvements to McCracken Road and acquire approximately 70 acres, including approximately 70 wetland acres, that are part of the headwaters of the St. Marks River and allow for restoration of a part of Black Creek. Following questions and discussion, the committee voted to support this project with qualifications, and a letter stating this was sent to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC).
- Feb. The committee heard the results of a workshop organized for county staff and citizen committee chairs concerning the state's Sunshine Law requirements. The committee also discussed the 2002 Annual Report due to the Board of County Commissioners, and proceeded to discuss and set committee priorities for the remainder of 2003. The priority list was as follows:
1. City of Tallahassee Southeast Sprayfield effects and management in Leon County, including water treatment and reuse.
 2. Tallahassee – Leon County Comprehensive Plan amendment review.
 3. Leon County watershed and lake management activities (including funding, priorities, and future studies).
 4. Ochlockonee River water quality impacts from upstream activities in Georgia.
 5. Leon County septic tank policy and regulation.
 6. Enforcement of Leon County rules and regulations addressing activities that impact surface and ground water quality.
 7. Future land development patterns in Leon County.

The committee was able to address all of these priorities during the year.

Other priority items not listed above include increased coordination between the county's Science Advisory Committee and the Citizens Water Resources Committee; and the Committee's interest in the activities and projects affecting water resources through the Blueprint 2000 and Beyond report, funded by the Tallahassee/Leon County penny sales tax extension.

- Mar. The committee sent a letter to the BCC supporting the County's efforts to acquire property to expand public access to Lower Lake Lafayette via a boat ramp.

The committee addressed Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments 2003-2-M-001, 2003-2-M-003, 2003-2-M-005, and 2003-2-T-007. Following discussion, the committee voted to recommend the support or denial of these amendments, and a letter stating these recommendations was sent to the Board.

A follow-up meeting in March was conducted by the committee in order to address changes made by staff to Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments 2003-2-M-001 and 2003-2-T-007, and to address amendments 2003-2-M-004, 2003-2-M-006, and 2003-2-T-008. Following questions and discussion, the committee voted to send their recommendations to the Board.

The Planning Department and the Planning Commission subsequently made changes to one or more of these amendments based in part on the committee's review comments.

- April Staff presented Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycle 2003-2-T-009 for committee review. Following discussion, the committee voted to recommend the support of this amendment, and a letter stating these recommendations was sent to the Board.

The committee listened to a presentation by staff representing the City of Tallahassee's Water Utility Department, including the Southeast Sprayfield, Lake Bradford Road (LBR) Wastewater Treatment Facility, and the Thomas P. Smith Water Reclamation Facility. Questions and a discussion followed the presentation. No action was taken by the committee.

Joe Hand of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection followed with a presentation of research and possible sources of pollution affecting the Wakulla River. Questions and a discussion followed the presentation. No action was taken by the committee at this time.

- May No meeting was held.

- June County Commissioner Tony Grippa spoke about Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment 2003-2-T-008, calling for the commencement of a joint City and County sub-area environmental evaluation process that could later be used as a basis for sector planning and other planning decisions. The sub-areas, to be used for analysis, are defined as drainage basins.

Commissioner Grippa discussed the origins, need, and intent for this text amendment, and then asked for the committee's comments and concerns. Following questions and discussion, the committee recommended their approval to the BCC. This amendment was later submitted to the Planning Commission, and was eventually approved by the BCC.

- July Cherry Shaw of the Leon County Attorney's Office presented a draft of the recently revised county aquifer protection ordinance for the committee to review and comment upon. Following discussion, a number of suggestions were made by the committee, but no action was taken. Ms. Shaw stated that she would incorporate these changes as appropriate and bring the revised draft back to the committee for their input and approval.

Staff briefed the committee on the coordination of the local, state, and federal studies addressing various aspects of groundwater quality and movement towards Wakulla

Springs. Staff also briefed the committee on the State of Florida's Total Maximum Daily Load pollution management program.

The committee then discussed the sedimentation, nutrification, and other environmental issues affecting Lake Munson as staff showed pictures of the lake acquired during a recent field trip. The committee then sent a letter to the Board of County Commissioners requesting that the county ask for, and contribute to, funding from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission for a dredging and lake bottom contouring project. The BCC later approved a resolution seeking such funding for this purpose.

- Aug. Staff presented a summary of the Leon County Woodville Recharge Basin Aquifer Protection Study.

Staff presented a list of Cycle 2004-1 proposed comprehensive plan amendments for the committee to review. The committee discussed the list, and chose four amendments (2004-1-T-12, T-15, T-18, and M-006) for staff to bring back to the September meeting for the committee to review.

- Sept. Staff presented Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment 2004-1-M-006, 2004-1-T-012, 2004-1-T-015, and 2004-1-T-018 to the committee for their review. Following questions and discussion, the committee voted to send their recommendations to the Board.

A follow-up meeting was held in September to address Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment 2004-1-T-015. Following questions and discussion, the committee voted to send their recommendations to the Board.

The Planning Department and the Planning Commission subsequently made changes to one or more of these amendments based in part on the committee's review comments.

- Oct. Anthony Gaudio, a private citizen and local business owner, presented an analysis and recommendations regarding the proposed Killearn Lakes addition to Leon County's current septic tank policies. Following questions and discussion, the committee then recommended to the Board of County Commissioners that the Killearn Lakes addition be delayed pending the creation of a working group or committee of expert citizens convened to review the entire policy and any additions to it, and to present a comprehensive set of policy and regulatory recommendations to the Board addressing the various issues and problem areas served by onsite waste disposal systems within the County. Although the Board did not choose to do so, the BCC did later vote to amend the county's septic tank policy to address this area.

Charles Pattison of 1000 Friends of Florida then presented his comments and a draft resolution for the Committee to consider regarding the Florida Council of 100's report on Florida's pending "water crisis." Following questions and discussion, the committee forwarded the draft resolution to the Board with several recommended changes for approval and passage.

- Nov. Staff presented County Environmental Management Act enforcement responsibilities, division of labor, process, and recent actions, aided by input provided by other county Growth and Environmental Management staff. Discussion issues included mitigation, the difficulties in enforcement, residential vs. commercial violations, the role of the County's Code Enforcement Board, monitoring, and recent issues, including sedimentation and volume control regulation. No actions were taken by the Committee.

Staff then presented the latest information regarding the pollution of the Ochlockonee River and recent County actions addressing this issue.

The Committee then discussed Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment 2004-1-T-012. Following questions and discussion, the Committee voted to forward a letter to the Board restating several concerns and recommendations made previously, including restriction of the initial amendment to the Urban Fringe Future Land Use category only at this time. In a Joint Meeting, the BCC and the City Commission voted to support this amendment consistent with the recommendations of the WRC.

- Dec. Nancy Linnan, a local attorney working for Wal-Mart Corporation, presented a summary of a company's proposal to pursue re-vesting of several properties on North Monroe Street that were previously considered together by Leon County as a Planned Unit Development (PUD). The re-vesting of these properties together may present an opportunity to convert an existing Wal-Mart store into a "Superstore." At present, the zoning of the property under consideration is Lake Protection. David McDevitt of Leon County followed this presentation with information from the county's perspective, including vesting and the need for more detail on Wal-Mart's proposal.

A question and answer period followed, as well as much discussion. Nancy moved that the committee send a representative to the public hearing scheduled in January 2004 in order to state the following sentiment of the committee: no support for re-vesting, based on the potential water quality impacts on Lake Jackson; support for the county enforcing its own environmental regulations; that Wal-Mart, if allowed to re-vest, must explicitly meet all current environmental and stormwater regulations; that the committee remain involved and informed as to this issue; and that the Board require staff to incorporate some kind of feedback mechanism into the regulatory process in order to be able to measure the effectiveness of the Lake Protection Future Land Use Map and zoning categories.

Andrea Polk Stevenson, a citizen activist living in the Killearn Lakes area, addressed the committee as to the severity and breadth of the Killearn Lakes Units I & II water quality issue. Following a vigorous question and discussion period, the committee took no action other than to express its support for a comprehensive and effective solution.